

REMARKS

By this Amendment, claims 1-44 are cancelled, and claims 45-57 are added. Thus, claims 45-57 are active in the application. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application are respectfully requested.

The specification and abstract have been carefully reviewed and revised to correct grammatical and idiomatic errors in order to aid the Examiner in further consideration of the application, and to limit the abstract to 150 words as required by the Examiner in item 3 on page 3 of the Office Action. The amendments to the specification and abstract are incorporated in the attached substitute specification and abstract. No new matter has been added.

Also attached hereto is a marked-up version of the substitute specification and abstract illustrating the changes made to the original specification and abstract.

In item 1 on page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner required that Figure 4 be labeled as "Prior Art". In response to this requirement by the Examiner, Figure 4 has revised to be labeled as "Prior Art". Replacement formal drawings of Figures 1-4 are submitted concurrently herewith under a separate cover letter. Approval of the replacement formal drawings is respectfully requested.

In item 32 on page 20 of the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that a copy of references "AM" (AU 6378398), "AN" (AZ 9803200) and "AO" (NO 981684) listed on the August 3, 2001 Form PTO-1449 were not received by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO), and therefore, the Examiner indicated that these references were not considered. Each of these references were first cited on the International Search Report (ISR) for the international application corresponding to the present application. The Applicants note, however, that the Notice of Acceptance mailed on December 11, 2001 indicates that a copy of the references cited in the ISR were indeed received by the PTO. Accordingly, since copies of the references cited in the ISR and in the August 3, 2001 Form PTO-1449 were indeed received by the PTO, the Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to consider references "AM", "AN" and "AO" listed on the August 3, 2001 Form PTO-1449. However, in the event that the Examiner is unable to obtain a copy of these references, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the

undersigned. For the Examiner's convenience, a copy of the Notice of Acceptance is submitted herewith.

The Applicants also note that reference "AN" was incorrectly listed on the August 3, 2001 Form PTO-1449 as being issued by country "AZ". As the ISR indicates, reference "AN" was issued by "ZA" (South Africa) instead of "AZ". Accordingly, a corrected Form PTO-1449 is submitted concurrently herewith under a separate cover letter.

In item 4 on page 2 of the Office Action, claims 3, 6, 9, 10, 13 and 15-44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regard as the invention. This rejection is believed to be moot in view of the cancellation of claims 1-44. Furthermore, the Applicants respectfully submit that new claims 45-57 have each been drafted in such a way so as to be definite by providing proper antecedent basis for all of the recited limitations and by particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the Applicants regard as the invention.

The Applicants thank the Examiner for kindly indicating, in item 29 on page 17 of the Office Action, that claims 5 and 14 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The Applicants also thank the Examiner for kindly indicating, in item 30 on page 18 of the Office Action, that claims 13, 18, 20, 28, 30, 36-38 and 40-42 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome their rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, and if rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

New claim 45 includes the limitations originally presented in cancelled claims 1-3, 26 and 36. New claim 46 includes the limitations originally presented in cancelled claims 1, 4, 27 and 37. New claim 47 includes the limitations originally presented in cancelled claims 1 and 5. New claim 55 includes the limitations originally presented in cancelled claims 1, 7, 8, 32 and 42. New claim 56 includes the limitations originally presented in cancelled claims 1, 7, 31 and 41. New claim 57 includes the limitations originally presented in cancelled claims 1 and 12-13.

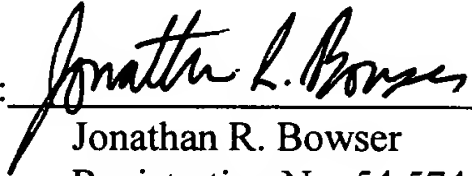
Accordingly, in view of the Examiner's assertion that claims 5, 13-14 18, 20, 28, 30, 36-38 and 40-42 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome their rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, and if rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, the Applicants respectfully submit that new claims 45-47 and 55-57, as well as new claims 48-54 which depend therefrom, are clearly allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is clearly in condition for allowance. An early notice thereof is respectfully solicited.

If, after reviewing this Amendment, the Examiner feels there are any issues remaining which must be resolved before the application can be passed to issue, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned by telephone in order to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Shoji MIYAZAKI et al.

By: 
Jonathan R. Bowser
Registration No. 54,574
Attorney for Applicants

JRB/jlg
Washington, D.C. 20006-1021
Telephone (202) 721-8200
Facsimile (202) 721-8250
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